

TO INDIA

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THE MESSAGE OF THE HIMALAYAS

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

IN the midst of the jarring noises of political strife, when voices are calling India to go hither and thither along the surface of life after more or less transient aims, this trumpet call comes from a prophet in his retreat on the slopes of the Himalayas. Above the dust and the low levels of conflict, in the cool air of high idealism, in the white purity of disinterestedness, he sees the future of India—the spiritual leadership of humanity. He does not argue, he does not persuade. Thrilled with the vision of India's destiny if she will but rise to it, he just Calls.

TO INDIA

THE MESSAGE OF THE HIMALAYAS

I

THE Himalayas—as far as the eye can reach—

A joy infinite broods over this ocean of mountains. And this joy is pulsating, vibrating as a living word, a creative voice—

It speaks. It speaks to India—Land of Bharat, receive the message that cometh from the heights, the message of the Himalayas !

This voice says to thee: “The hour approaches, the hour glorious : thy liberation. Thy hope draws nigh thee, but not as thou didst hope for it—

Greater, more exalted, it draws nigh ; more unmistakable, more impelling, more unyielding for all—and for thee !—

II

It comes because God has sent it. Hence dost thou call for it. Our call and our cries are but the responses. Our prayers are but the echoes—

Say not: “It is I who conquer!” We conquer nothing save that which is given by the Word above. Receive as a gift thy conquest.

As a gift of which none can despoil thee. And doubt no more. When the Supreme Will commands, who can oppose? All obey—

And now this Will is commanding—commanding all the nations. To each it dictates its decree, its sovereign Mandate.

To India it says: “Be free!”



III

But how? It matters not. What the Spirit ordains, nature executes in a thousand ways. All are available. She has not our narrowness—

She has not our egoisms, our partialities, our moral limitations. She is not bound by our virtues, nor does she commit our faults.

She serves the Eternal with all her forces. For she knows that all are His: Violence and Love, Peace and War, Order and Chaos, Restraint as well as Destruction . . .

In the thunderbolt of Indra as in the heart-flame of Agni, in the onslaught of Rudra, in the tenderness of Vishnu, she acknowledges her one Lord . . .

Her Lord in His many forms . . .



IV

Thy rulers know but the force of arms. Therefore, they have deprived thee of it. So shalt thou be free to conquer them without it . . .

Yet of this be not boastful. That force is not for thee. Thou hast not the blade of Arjuna. Share not also his ignorance ere Krishna enlightened him . . .

Invoke not the name of Love to cover thy fear of bloodshed. Egoism has the same fear. Do not confuse the supreme virtue with dread of sacrifice . . .

For the supreme virtue is that of Sacrifice. Thou canst not escape its law. Thou wilt have to immolate thyself. Thou wilt have to die to thyself—in a deeper way . . .

To die to everything which holds thee in death . . .



V

How will thy fetters be broken? They will fall of themselves when the hands of thy masters, who made them so heavy, become too weak to retain them.

They will be broken even as their own fetters were broken, in the far-off days of their servitude, when the empire which had subjected them crumbled in pieces.

For no empire endures—none has force—when it is founded upon force. Force is but a wave which passes over the moving ocean of things...

It lifts for a moment one of them above the rest, only to let it fall, the next moment, into the abyss. And the higher it has lifted it, the lower it lets it fall...

So shall it be with the things of to-day... Behold!



VI

Behold how many empires have just crumbled away. Thinkest thou it has only been for the good of others. And that the Will which has broken those will let these subsist? . . .

Thinkest thou that the Work of renovation, conversion of people—the cause of these ruins—is completed. Dost thou not see it continue—that it spreads, and that no one escapes it?

Dost thou not see the same swords with which they scattered each other now pointed by each towards his own heart. And the ravages abroad giving place to that within? . . .

Dost thou not see, over all, the same giant shadow, the shadow of the giant arising, the new Titan who builds on the ruined things of yesterday those of to-morrow? . . .

For all are condemned, but condemned to new birth!



VII

All are condemned. Thy masters also. The Empire they founded on thee, on thy servitude, will pass, and be no more. It passes. It is no more . . .

It is no more because He who rules the nations, who with a sign overturns thrones, with a breath disperses armies, has turned from it His face.

It passes. It is no more, because the truth of it—the idea which was its being—is no longer in it. Because having been the instrument, it has become the obstacle . . .

—As long it was the instrument, a world of embattled enemies could not have destroyed it. But because it is the obstacle, no one has even to lift a finger: it is already no more!

It passes, because it belongs to the past!



VIII

It passes with the ancient spirit of Europe—with Europe and her dominion. When the body dies, which member can subsist? It is not the empire of a people: it is the empire of Europe which passes.

Do not curse her. Do not imitate her. Receive from her thy heritage. Learn from her what thou must be, to give forth light—and what thou must not be, to escape decay.

Thou who emergest from the great night, hail those who return to it after their great day. They go to find in it the secret of higher destinies, of more splendid works!

Thou who awakest from the dead, hail those who die. Some day they shall awake, as thou, purified, in the glory of a new dawn...

Hail that which was great, and which shall be still greater...

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IX

Hail that which was . . . But turn towards that which will be . . . The same wave which sinks there, arises elsewhere. It sinks under Europe. It rolls towards Asia. It comes to arouse Asia !

The same sun which in the days of old pursued its course westward from the Orient, after setting there, now rises in the East again. Turn thee towards Asia if thou wouldest see the Dawn !

The same balancing movement of the great scale of Time, by which Asia declined in the moment Europe was mounting, now causes Europe to descend, Asia to ascend !

—The decline of Europe ; the ascension of Asia : these are the two terms of the equation in which are solved the destinies of peoples and thine own. The two leaves of the door open to thy future, to thy hope . . .

Its two wings—one in the shadow, the other in the light . . .

XII

India, thou art the heart of Asia. How shalt thou live apart from her! Thou art the heart of Asia as China is her brain, Japan her strong arm. How shalt thou live apart from them!

Even as the destiny of a European people cannot be separated from that of Europe, so thy destiny cannot be severed from that of Asia. Thy problem is not thy own. It is that of all Asia.

Thy freedom is that of Asia herself. And the freedom of Asia depends on her unity. To Europe only she was one: one single prey to be divided! To be no longer that prey she must become one in the face of Europe.

Freedom; Unity of Asia: such is the watchword. New civilisation of Asia: such is the programme. League of Nations of Asia: such is the way of action!

To the size of that ideal, measure thy soul!



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THE MESSAGE OF THE HIMALAYAS

I

And now understand the meaning of the past: Thou didst live for centuries in death—in the narrow tomb of servitude. But that tomb was for thee the cradle of a resurrection!

When the time had come, thy prophets appeared. They said to thee: "Rise out of the grave. But first drag off the cerements which bind all thy members. And cleanse thy body of its corruption."

They said to thee: "First free thyself within. Thus shall come the freedom without." But their voice seemed lost in the wilderness. And then, the gaols smothered it. Only thy soul, deep within thee, heard it . . .

Others have now come. And some say to thee: "Do not break thy bonds. Enlarge them merely." And others say: "Straighten thy yoke. And if thou canst not, then destroy it. Mend it or end it!"

But thy soul, within her silence, hears another Voice . . .



II

And this Voice says: Those who first awakened thee spoke not falsely. No one can leave the sepulchre unless he arise from the dead. Prepare in thee that which comes to thee—the new morn!

The others who sought to lead thee to more liberty, brought thee unto more oppression and opprobrium. And those who preached to thee of peace have driven thee to revolt, without knowing it.

But these who now believe they guide thy revolt are bringing thee, in their turn, where they would not. All lead thee towards another goal than their own—towards that of thy real destiny...

That of thy renovation, of thy remoulding, of thy new creation into the light of a new life. And for this creation, if need be, thou shalt be first thrown into the crucible, into the furnace. Thou shalt be cast into chaos...

That chaos from which new-born worlds arise, pure and free!



III

Thou shalt enter into the future. Enter into it willingly if thou dost not wish to be forced. Enter into it not looking back with thy eye wistfully fixed on the past...

Be not proud of what thou wast. Nothing is a heavier burden than a great past. And bind not thyself to it: nothing so corrupts the present as the remains of a dead past...

Thou sayest: "My civilisation was one of the most brilliant in the world." What matter it if it be no more, and if that which has to be is not yet? Having been is not to be. And merely to survive is not to live...

Thou sayest: "I have my Sastras as a guide and my Vedas as a foundation." The Vedas eternal are written from age to age. The Sastras of the spirit have no termination. Allow thy Rishis to write them afresh...

Allow thy seers to sing again.

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VI

Thou shalt live as a nation when thou shalt cease to sin against Humanity! For to abase one man is to sin against all. Thou hast created the people of the "pariahs". So hast thou become the pariah of peoples!...

National egoism was not enough. Provincial egoism was still too broad for thee. Thou hast to descend to the pettiest of all—that of caste. Reject all these egoisms. Live in Love—and thou shalt live!

In love and unity. Unity is not only the watchword of all Asia. It is also that of all India. It is the *mukti*, the only possible *mukti* for India as for Asia.

Thou claimest equality among people and races. And thou wouldest not have it among castes!... Thou shalt be the sister of all nations only when all thy sons among themselves are brothers...

And all thy daughters, their sisters and equals!...



VII

Thy daughters—From within they are kept in servitude. Wherefore should not thy sons be kept in it from without? Thy women are among the most suppressed in this world. Why should not thy nation suffer the same fate? . . .

There is a link of destiny, close and mysterious, between women and their nation. A nation also is a woman, a mother. Wherever women are treated as slaves, the nation becomes a slave also . . .

It is woman who creates man. Wherever men hold their women in ignorance, they remain in it themselves. Their knowledge is for them but a veil which they buy to cover this basic darkness.

Wherever women arise, the nation springs up. In this thou canst recognise an awakening people—that its daughters sound the call to awake. Without them there is no birth for men nor rebirth for nations!

They are the mothers of the future. Let them create! . . .

VIII

Behind the purdah, what thou imprisonst with thy women is therefore thy future, thy liberty. If thou wouldst be free, free them. Free them lest they finally free themselves . . .

There is in this some danger? All life is danger. The whole universe is an adventure. But far better this danger of the moving life than the security and quiet of the tomb!

Art thou afraid that they will imitate the women of the West? Fear that, only if thou leavest them not free to be themselves. And trust them. They hold in them the genius of their race . . .

That genius of great sacrifice—without which thou couldst never have bent them; of the inner beauty—which shines through its veils; and of real love, invisible yet ever present—like God! . . .

Let them reveal to the world their soul—thy true soul! . . .

IX

For it is thy soul that must now appear—the great Soul, asleep and hidden, who waits for the Dawn, and for whom the Dawn is waiting—that their two splendours be mingled! . . .

Thy ancient soul that no one longer knows, so long was her exile, so deep her retreat . . . Thy ancient soul—with fresh thoughts, thoughts that no one can still know . . .

Thy soul which was lacking to the world, and which comes again to it, not to isolate herself, to shut herself away from others, but to unite with all—that all become one!

Thy soul, and with her a greater—that of Asia. For the one cannot appear without the other. And behind them, beyond them, the most marvellous: the sovereign Soul of Humanity . . .

For whom they have to prepare the throne!

X

Thy soul—and the treasure of her discovery: the treasure of which a few jewels have already fallen on thee—jewels of art and of science—a few priceless pearls among numberless others! . . .

Thy soul—and the treasure of her revelation, of which the rays are already enlightening thee. Thy soul harmonising two worlds and making them one: all the yogas of the Spirit associated with that of Matter . . .

Thy soul—and the treasure of thy hopes. For it is in her. In her is the Force, free and creative. In her is the Life, and the joy of Life. In her is the Rising, the Ascension, the Glory!

Thy soul—and her Light, her message to the world. For the light of a nation is that it brings to the World. Its greatness that of the things it creates for others . . .

Its true richness—that of its gifts! . . .

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XI

Behold, in front of thee, thy future . . . Seest thou there fetters, yokes, blonde warriors come to dictate to thee? Nay, for thy soul has appeared, and with her—Liberty!

Seest thou there barriers, divisions, doors closed to the stranger, to the pariah, to Brother Man? Nay, for thy soul has arisen, and with her—Fraternity!

Seest thou there enslaved women, child-widows, prisoners of man and of his egoism? Nay, for thy soul has been manifested, and with her—Equality, Justice!

Justice and Love . . . Seest thou there destitute, ignorant, oppressed, famine-stricken? Seest thou there the rich—those beings of the sordid past? All this is no more. Since all is for all; and all are but one!

And over all resplendently smiles thy soul . . .

XII

Something grand approaches . . . Something which never was ; which comes from the infinite Heaven to these worlds, to transform them . . . India, Aryavārtha, give thou birth to it !

It is a Force, a Power. It is as a Love greater than love, as a Light purer than light. It is a virtue of which no one was aware. Give thou to it a name !

One is coming—whom no one knows ; and for whom all are awaiting. One, as it were the New God of this Universe, the God of the new man—of the superman . . .

India, Aryavārtha, let Him descend on thee. And thou shalt be blessed among all nations. Thou shalt be hailed, thou Holy Land, throughout all centuries by all beings . . .

—All beings, his guests in the Paradise of the Earth . . .

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